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Operations Reported Successful in 80% Of 'Blue Baby' Cases

By the Associated Press

BALTIMORE, Nov. 29.—Two years ago today little Miss "E. M. S." was wheeled into the surgical amphitheater at the Johns Hopkins Hospital for a delicate operation to correct an insufficient flow of blood into her lungs.

E. M. S.—her identity is a medical secret—died, but the operation, performed 270 times since that first attempt, has given new hope to the parents of "blue" babies throughout the world.

The surgical technique, developed by Dr. Alfred Blalock and Dr. Helen B. Taussig, head of the children's cardiac clinic, has been successful in about 80 per cent of the cases.

"Anniversary" Case Postponed.
There was no "blue" baby operation on the schedule today. Ten-year-old Judy Conner, who lives at Richmond Hill, N. Y., was to have been the "anniversary" case, but her operation has been postponed a few days.

In the two years since E. M. S. was operated on, the hospital has been besieged with letters and telegrams from parents of afflicted children. The cardiac clinic has scheduled 250 more operations and has made appointments for examinations at the rate of two a day through next May. It has 200 other requests for appointments.

Each "blue" baby was born with a malformed heart which prevents the blood from getting enough oxygen. Without the operation, virtually all are doomed to semi-invalidism and early death.

Youngsters have come to Hopkins from France, Canada and almost every State in the Union, in Navy bombers, chartered Army transport planes and trains. One mother hitch-hiked 400 miles from Southern West Virginia with her baby, only to find he was not operable.

Nature of Operation.

The artery which pumps blood to the lungs of these babies is defective. The delicate operation, sometimes lasting three hours, consists in joining a branch of this artery to a branch of the aorta, which carries blood to all the body except the lungs. An auxiliary supply of blood is thus pumped to the lungs via

what physicians call the subclavian or innominate detour.

Recently doctors at Northwestern University have announced a successful experiment using the aorta itself to supplement the pulmonary artery.

Not all blue babies can be helped. Those who fall into the inoperable category must wait and hope that the constant research at Hopkins and other hospitals will result in a cure for their type.

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